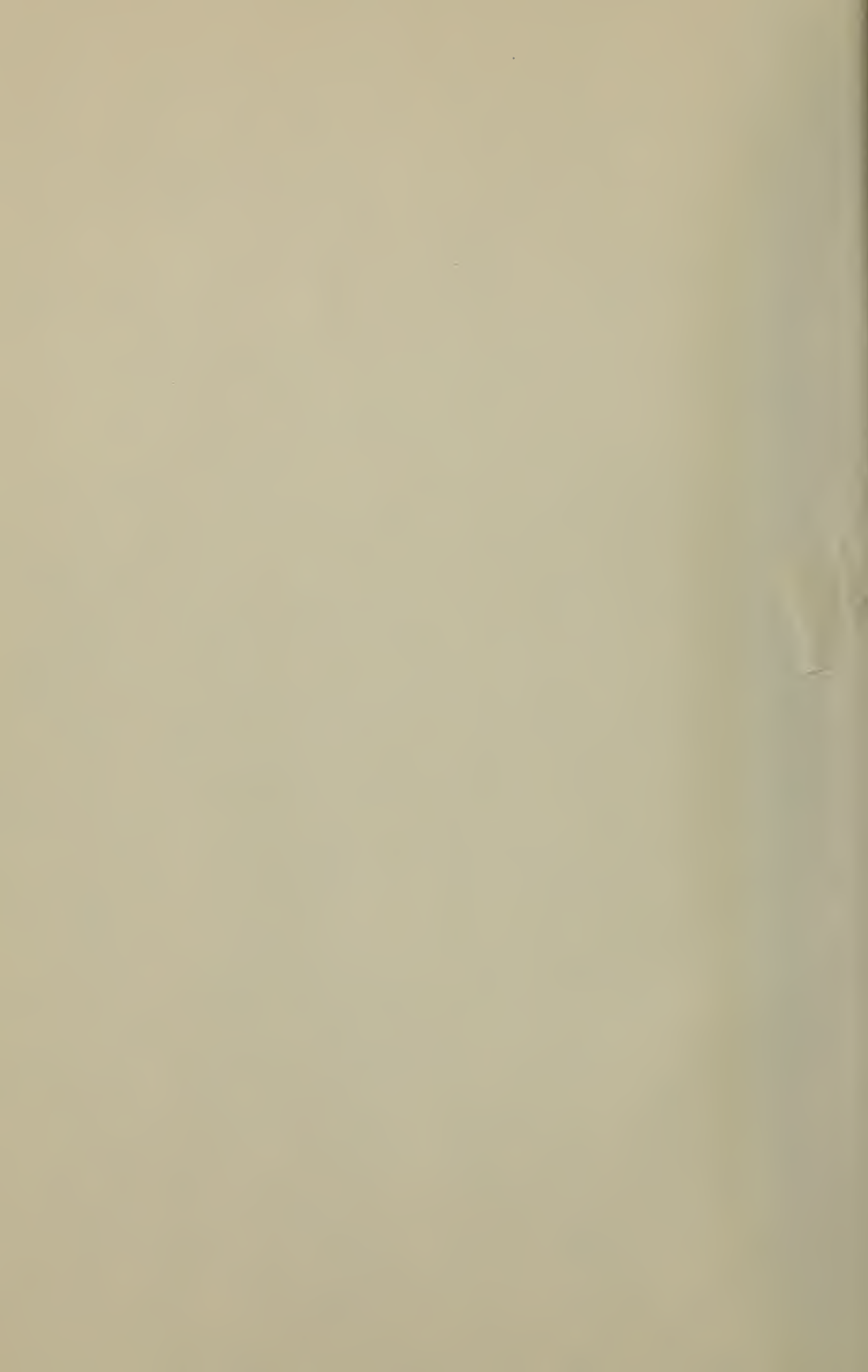


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The Caxton Reproductions



A List of the Reproductions, both
Imitation and in Fac-Simile, of
the Productions of the Press
of William Caxton, Eng-
land's First Printer.

✧NUMBER✧OF✧COPIES✧PRINTED✧



For Sale and Distribution in the United States :

On fine tinted paper, with initials in carmine, . . . 58 copies.
On plain paper, with initials in black, 60 copies.
On large paper (fine tinted, carmine initials), small folio, 7 copies. . 125



To Mr. Beedham, for Distribution in Europe :

On fine tinted paper, with initials in carmine, . . . 53 copies.
On plain paper, with initials in black, 12 copies.
On large paper (fine tinted, carmine initials), small folio, 4 copies. 69



CAXTON'S DEVICE.

A

LIST OF THE REPRODUCTIONS

BOTH

IMITATION AND IN FAC-SIMILE

OF

THE PRODUCTIONS OF THE PRESS

OF

WILLIAM CAXTON

ENGLAND'S FIRST PRINTER

By John Springer

WITH SOME PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

BY B. H. BEEDHAM



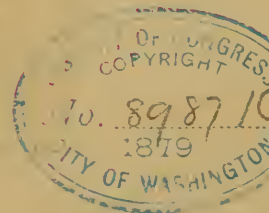
NEW YORK

JONATHAN S. GREEN, 5 MURRAY STREET

IOWA CITY, IOWA

JOHN SPRINGER

✚ 1879 ✚





Entered, according to act of Congress, in the year one thousand eight hundred and seventy-nine,

By JOHN SPRINGER, *all*

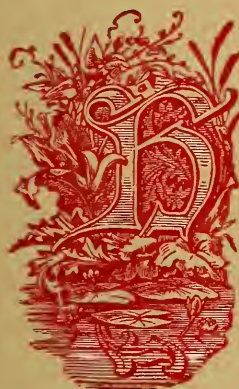
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❖NOTE TO THE AMERICAN EDITION❖



APPLY, it is not needful in presenting this booklet and asking for it public appreciation and patronage, that it should be preceded by an apologetic note. The author has stated in his Preliminary Observations the reasons which led him to compile this LIST OF THE REPRODUCTIONS OF THE PRODUCTIONS OF THE PRESS OF WILLIAM CAXTON, a task for which he is eminently qualified, having been for many years a close student of the history of Caxton, and the lives and labors of the early English printers. The descriptions of the Reproductions of the works from Caxton's press may be unhesitatingly accepted as accurate and trustworthy. All of them are made from volumes in the author's possession.

So far distant is the United States from the land of Caxton, and the scene of his labors, that it is not to be expected that the same active interest should be felt in his history that is now present, and stronger than ever, in England. Yet we are by no means destitute of an interest in Caxton and things Caxtonian. As early as 1872 there was published in an Eastern typographical magazine* an entertaining historical sketch of

* Mr. Theo. L. DeVinne, in *The Printers' Circular* (Philadelphia) Vol. VII., pp. 241, 281, 321, 353 (September, October, November, December, 1872).

England's prototypographer, the first —I think— written by an American in which Caxton was considered as a printer. The hold which Caxton has taken upon the American literary world daily grows stronger; and it was in graceful recognition of this responsive feeling that Mr. Beedham committed to the press of a foreign land that which would have been gladly undertaken at home as a mercantile venture, resigning all hope of pecuniary profit, and presenting his work to the reader without the prestige which a London imprint gives. It is a gracious act, and I hope that it may be recognized as such.

This pamphlet treats only of the Reproductions of the books printed at the press of the First English Printer. It may not be amiss to refer to one of the influences which have led to a reproduction, in luxurious and expensive imitation, of old-time crudeness and simplicity. William Caxton does not enlist our sympathies in the guise of a great author. His literary efforts were limited to translations from the French and Latin, and to the prologues and epilogues to his books. It is not because of rare typographical beauty that these books have been sought out and imitated at great cost; for to the untrained eye they present an unreadable appearance. Nor is it because of their intrinsic worth; it may well be doubted whether the most ardent Caxton lovers have ever read his printed pages as a literary treat. But he was THE FIRST ENGLISH PRINTER,—the first man of historical flesh and blood who introduced into England that lever that has done more than Archimedes dared offer to do—that moves mind and matter, body, soul, and spirit. And who among living men shall estimate how much has been added to the value of these books by the goodness and nobleness of the Printer's life? the productions of whose press are an everlasting memorial to truth and virtue. The life of William Caxton was the life of a good man. There is not one recorded or tradition-told deed therein contained that noble manhood or pure womanhood need blush to recount. While wickedness and depravity are excused because of "the times in which men lived," let it be accounted for praise to

Caxton that he was better than his day and generation; — that in an age when civil dissensions had shaken public and private virtue to the foundations, and when religion, halted between a retrogression to fetichism and an advance to moral living, we find him putting this sentiment into the mouth of one of the characters in a fable written by himself: “If I do my true ‘diligence in the cure of my parishioners in preaching and ‘teaching, and do the part belonging to my cure, I shall have ‘heaven therefor. And if their souls be lost, or one of them, ‘by my default, I shall be punished therefor, and hereof I am ‘sure.” Mr. William Blades, Caxton’s last and best biographer, well says of him: * “We can claim for him a character which ‘attracted the love and respect of his associates — a character ‘on which history has chronicled no stain — a character which, ‘although surrounded through a long period of civil war by ‘the worst forms of cruelty, hypocrisy, and injustice in Church ‘and State, retained to the last its innate simplicity and truth- ‘fulness.”

The author has incidentally referred to the inability of the many to procure copies of the issues of Caxton’s press, for two reasons: their scarcity, and the consequent high price set upon them, down to the veriest fragments, until collectors weigh down the printed pages with gold, and even with bank-notes. According to Mr. Blades, only five hundred and forty-two identified books and fragments, counting the smallest scraps, remain from the productions of the Westminster Press. And of this small number, nearly two hundred and fifty are held in five English libraries. A moment’s reflection shows the high value in such cases of accurate reproductions. The greater part of these reproductions have been issued in limited numbers, and they likewise are imitations of the originals in that they are constantly appreciating in price.

How came I to print this booklet? It was on this wise: In

* Biography and Typography of William Caxton (London, 1877), p. 93.

the Spring of 1878 there were distributed seventy-two copies of a privately printed Catalogue, with notes and appendices, of the books relating to historical and practical typography, and its allied subjects, then contained in my few "bringings-together." Mr. C. W. H. Wyman, of London, kindly furnished me with a short list of addresses to which copies might be acceptably sent. Among them was the name of "Mr. B. H. Beedham, Kimbolton, Huntingdonshire," a gentleman wholly unknown to me. In due time there came to hand from this recipient of the printed trifle a courteous and friendly letter of acknowledgment, which made it incumbent on me to reply, and after some further correspondence, I was gladly surprised by the receipt of the following note:

KIMBOLTON, England, 27th August, 1878.

Dear Sir:

You are interested in Caxton. The productions of his press are, practically, unattainable. But there have appeared several reproductions in absolute fac-simile, and others in imitation, of the books issued from his press. All of these I possess,—every one. Now, if you like to print, I will write and furnish to you notices of these reproductions. The extent would probably be about the same as your "Essay"* on Caxton. What say you?

Very truly yours,

B. BEEDHAM.

John Springer, Esq.

Few preliminaries called for settlement, and it was arranged that I should bring out the work in the United States, and that it should not be printed in England, I furnishing Mr. Beedham with such number of copies as he might desire, identical with the American edition, save in this Introduction. By my advice, however, he was induced to enlarge considerably upon his original design, and the text finally reached me almost as it appears in the following pages, the first installment coming to hand on the second day of June.

I do not think I have need to be ashamed of, nor to apologize for the typographical execution of this work. It has been a labor of love, and of my own hands. Still it is not just what I

* Privately printed and distributed in February, 1877 (fifty-five copies only), 8vo, pp. 11,—equivalent to about four pages of this pamphlet.

could wish. The facilities of an interior town printing-office, far removed from the next-door advantages of a large city, are not such as afford the means for the execution of the finer class of book-printing, —a class of printing that is exemplified to perfection in the beautiful works which Messrs. Blades and DeVinne, distinguished as printers no less than as authors, have given to the public. As I have said, I do not reproach myself with the result. I have endeavored, in my own best way, to present the author's words in a dress that he need not be unwilling to show to others, and which shall be no discredit to my honorable handicraft. I wish that I might add to it the proud motto of an eminent London printer— *Opus Opificem probat*. I have done as much as was possible without an outlay beyond my pecuniary abilities. I hope that the deep interest which attaches to the subject, and the known ability of the author for treating it, may cause any merely mechanical shortcomings to be overlooked.

Separated from its author by a distance which requires four weeks, under the most favorable circumstances, for its traversing, his work is necessarily fixed upon the page without his revision. It is not an absolute transcript of the manuscript. The few changes which have been made seemed, in the eyes of its "step-father," imperatively called for. I hope the critical reader may not be able to discern them.

As it is, I am largely indebted to others for the assistance which has made it possible for me to compass this work. To Hon. John P. Irish, proprietor of *The Iowa City Press*, for the most indispensable —facilities for typographical execution, and for much and helpful labor in revision. To Messrs. John J. Hamilton, of Bloomfield, Iowa, and John F. Marthens, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and, especially, to Mr. Jonathan S. Green, of New York, who to multiplied kindnesses adds that of publishing this pamphlet.

The bookling is not printed, nor published, as a mercantile speculation, nor with a desire to climb upon the ladder which its author has erected. If it shall give me back what it has

cost; bring me into closer union with those whose sympathy and good-fellowship I covet; and lead to a yet better appreciation of that great man among good and true Englishmen-- WILLIAM CAXTON— then the printer's object will have been accomplished.

JOHN SPRINGER.

Iowa City, Iowa, August 15th, 1879.





❖PRELIMINARY❖OBSERVATIONS❖



T was in the year 1812, that a single volume printed by Caxton produced at public auction a sum exceeding one thousand pounds. This circumstance must have excited a desire to know something about the man, one of the productions of whose printing-press had a value equal to that of a moderate sized farm. The authority to be consulted was the work by Lewis of Margate called "The Life of Mayster Wylliam Caxton of the Weald of Kent." It was printed in 1737, to the extent of one hundred and fifty copies only, with a portrait which was fictitious, and at the time we are speaking of, the volume would have cost about three times as much as the exhaustive biography which Mr. Blades compiled from his larger work and gave to the world in 1877. An ordinary book-lover of 1812, seized with an insatiable desire to look upon a veritable Caxton, would probably have sought the privilege, as a favour, at the hands of some private possessor. The British Museum would have been the last place that any reasonable man would have thought of going to. Though an institution supported by the nation, it was not then, nor for long afterwards, a national institution in any sense worthy of the name. It existed as a quiet and dignified retreat for a few literary men, its officials,

who could labour there undisturbed. The public were treated as the natural enemies of those inside. The regulations were framed upon the supposition that every one seeking admission had some improper object in view. When I, then very young, first made application to get into the Reading Room, there was so much to be done that, anxious as I was to gain my end, I gave up the whole thing in disgust. How completely is all this changed! Now, the facilities in all respects, and for all purposes, are so great, that I do not quite know how they could be greater. I never hear a suggestion of alteration without an unquiet feeling lest something that is good should be supplanted by something which is less good. Now, the readiest way to see a real Caxton is to walk into the Museum and to look at those displayed in its show-cases. No asking, no trouble, no anything.

The interest excited by the sale of the copy of "The Recuyell of the Histories of Troy," nearly seventy years ago, to which I have referred, however great it may have been, would be slight and partial compared with that which the sale of a famous Caxton would now create. Of the innumerable changes which have been brought about in the interval which separates us from 1812, not the least wonderful, assuredly, is the immensely increased activity of the printing-press. As an offshoot from this activity may be mentioned the demand for reprints, in choice old-fashioned type, of rare and valuable books. In 1812, a fac-simile or an imitation of Caxton's type could only be seen in some costly work unknown beyond the circle of the avowed book-lover. Now, we are so Caxtonian in our tastes that tradesmen's circulars are issued by the thousand in type which is an excellent imitation of that used by our first printer. This indicates very plainly that he is much better known and that information respecting him is much more readily accessible than in times past. And I venture to assert that the popular acquaintance with Caxton, the acquaintance of the people of England with England's First Printer, and their appreciation of him, date precisely from the year 1844. In that year Charles Knight gave to the world his "William Caxton, the First English Printer; a Biography." It was circulated not by hundreds but by thousands. It was the first of a series, literally and truly, for ALL READERS, and which till then was unequalled,

and has never since been surpassed in the two cardinal points, for such an undertaking, of being small in price and large in value. This is not the place to enter into a history of Knight's Weekly Volume, as the Series was called, and I will therefore only say that the matters on which I differ, and differ most widely, from Charles Knight, are neither few nor unimportant, yet do I count him worthy of all honour in his sincere desire to benefit "the people," using the formula which he would have adopted. When Charles Knight's little volume appeared, the Caxton who to persons of ordinary intelligence and information, to the average, every-day Englishman, in fact, had hitherto been a heap of dry bones, became clothed with flesh, a living and moving being. For the sum of one shilling, there was then accessible the most authentic, the fullest, the best account anywhere to be found of England's First Printer. It was a graceful act of Messrs. Clowes, as their offering to the Caxton Celebration, to reprint this work in the slightly modified form which it assumed after its appearance in the Weekly Volume Series. It was an appropriate and well-timed remembrance of one who had passed away, who in his day had taken a warm interest in Caxton and in printing. Only I regret that Messrs. Clowes should have done their part to perpetuate a fiction by giving as the portrait of Caxton that which is really the portrait of the Italian Burchiello. Charles Knight was the very man, in his day and for the requirements of his time, to write about Caxton. His book may not satisfy the critical reader; probably he did not make this his object; his work was intended for a popular audience, and for such an audience, no work could be better adapted. The reader will remember that we are in 1844. In 1844, the public was not ready for those elaborate and minute details about Caxton and the productions of his press which have since been laid before it. The requirement of that time was essentially a popular book, addressed to a wide circle of readers, calculated to interest in itself, and calculated also to stimulate a desire for further information. If this were Charles Knight's object, he was entirely successful. In the same year in which the first Weekly Volume appeared, a distinguished French writer, in a lengthy article in one of the leading literary reviews of Paris, invited attention to the life and works of the First English Printer. I speak of the article

of M. Le Roux de Lincy in *The Revue Britannique*, a few copies of which were printed in a separate form, in the sense of showing an extending interest in Caxton, rather than in that of an addition to our knowledge of him. For my own part, if it be permitted to me to speak of myself, I may say that it was the perusal of the first Weekly Volume in my youthful days which awakened in me the great and lively interest I have never since ceased to take in Caxton and his productions.

Not to repeat what will be found in the Catalogue which follows these Observations, I pass on to a modest prospectus which lies before me. It is dated September, 1858, and it announces as being in preparation, in one volume, a Treatise on the Typographical Works of William Caxton, by William Blades. Its proposed contents were, in brief: a few particulars (some new) in the life of William Caxton; an essay on Caxton's types and typography; an exact collation of every work at present known to have issued from Caxton's press; some account of the Caxtons contained in the chief public and private libraries of the last two centuries, and an accurate transcript of all Caxton's prologues and epilogues. There is also lying before me another prospectus of the same work, dated July, 1860, the most noteworthy variation from the earlier one being under the first head, where we are now promised, "some new and important particulars in the life of William Caxton." Yet again there is lying before me, with the date of 1861, a pamphlet of a dozen pages, whose object it is to announce the intended publication, on the 1st May, of that year, in two volumes demy quarto, of "The Life and Typography of William Caxton, England's Prototypographer, compiled from original sources by William Blades," and to furnish, in detail, a statement of the intended contents of each volume. In fact, the first volume did appear in the month of May, 1861, but it was not until March, 1863, that the second was ready. An author's performances do not always come up to his promise, but in this instance certainly the performance goes beyond the promise. Seldom have the critics been so unanimous in their favourable judgment of any work, as they were of these two volumes of Mr. Blades. There is, probably, scarcely any one who is better able than myself to add his personal testimony to that which the work itself affords of the labour and

pains bestowed upon it. Writing to me some years after the completion of the work, Mr. Blades says, "only this morning I took down a thick quarto volume consisting entirely of communications from you concerning Caxton and his typography. They vividly recalled the pleasure with which, many years ago, I used to find upon my arrival here, a two or three sheet letter full of antiquarian research, very useful to me in the work I was then upon." In the course of the correspondence referred to, which on my part I recall with no less pleasure, it soon became apparent that difficulty and trouble were to Mr. Blades unknown quantities; that he was determined to find out everything that could be found out, and in that view to neglect nothing, however apparently slight, that was brought under his notice. If to this we add the possession of technical knowledge so clear as to make technical details plain to those who have no such knowledge, and the heartiest love for his subject, we shall not wonder that he has produced a work of the highest order, and a model of its kind.

This work indicates a new era in matters Caxtonian. The public was prepared for, and has declared its appreciation of details the most elaborate, the most minute, respecting Caxton and the works which issued from his press. I do not know what more could have been said either about him, or about them, yet one is never tired, one never wearies, never thinks that anything has been pushed too far. Certainly no other printer of any country, or of any age, can boast of so worthy a memorial. The ground had been prepared, and the work was welcomed by a much wider circle than, twenty years previously would have hailed its publication.

To complete this part of my story, I may here note that in 1877 Mr. Blades issued an octavo volume called "The Biography and Typography of William Caxton," which, as I suggested to him, may be considered as a *concio ad populum*, or intended for those generally interested, while the earlier and more extensive work is a *concio ad clerum*, or designed for those who take a more special interest in the subject.

In the course of 1876 was matured the scheme which, under the name of the Caxton Celebration, was brought to so successful an issue in the summer of the following year. Its object was two-fold; on the one hand, a national homage to the First

English Printer, and on the other, the provision of some charitable help to followers of Caxton's art who might stand in need of such assistance. Upon grounds into which it is unnecessary here to enter, it was the popular belief that the art of printing was introduced into England by Caxton in 1474, and hence it was proposed to hold the Celebration in 1874. A letter from Mr. Blades, received by the promoters April 23, 1874, from which the following extract is printed in the Prospectus of the Caxton Celebration, seems satisfactorily to dispose of that date:

"At the end of Caxton's 'Chess-book' is the date of translation, 'Finished the last day of March . . . 1474.' According to modern reckoning this was really 1475, because, as I have shown in my 'Life of Caxton' ii., p. 9, the new year in the 'Low Countries did not begin then until Easter-day. Now 'Easter-day in 1474 fell upon April 10, and therefore Caxton did not finish his translation in Bruges till March 31, 1475. As the book was printed after that in Bruges, and before Caxton came to England with the new art, we must, I think, arrive at this conclusion: Caxton probably came to England in 1476, but the first indisputable date we have to stand on is the 'printing of 'The Dictes' in 1477."

Adopting, therefore, 1477 as the date of the Introduction of printing into England, it was decided that the celebration to commemorate that event should be held in the month of June, 1877. The possessors of Caxtons and of the works of other early printers showered their treasures upon the Celebration Committee with a liberality which must have surpassed all their anticipations. A whole host of accessories connected with printing added considerably to the interest of the Celebration. It was at first intended that the collection should remain open for a very brief period only, from Monday, June 11 to Saturday, June 23, but in the result it was opened on Saturday, June 30, and closed on Saturday, September 1. The gross number of visitors amounted to 24,684, and the gross receipts for admission were £981.6.2. In every sense, literary, artistic, mechanical, and last, but not least, financial, the Celebration was a great success. Its pecuniary result was the handing over to the Printers' Pension Corporation of the net sum of £1116.3.2.

The following list of some of the memorials of the Celebration may not be without interest to the reader. Others occur further on :

CAXTON CELEBRATION, 1877. CATALOGUE OF THE LOAN COLLECTION OF ANTIQUITIES CONNECTED WITH THE ART OF PRINTING. Preliminary Issue. *London, n. d.: fcap. 8vo, pp. xix, 404. Price, one shilling.*

The same. Edited by George Bullen, Esqr., F. S. A., Keeper of the Printed Books, British Museum. *London, n. d.: fcap. 8vo, pp. xix, 456. Price, one shilling.*

This edition contains Mr. Stevens's Remarks on Printed Bibles, which he has since republished in a separate volume. Before the close of the Celebration, there was an issue precisely similar, so far as I can discover, save that it bears upon the cover, though not upon the title-page, the words, "Revised Edition," and that an error in numbering the pages, which occurred in the former edition after p. 176, is corrected, and the last page is 472 instead of 456. The price was raised to half-a-crown. A LARGE PAPER edition of one hundred and fifty-seven copies, on superfine, toned hand-made paper, was issued to subscribers at twelve shillings and sixpence per copy. Ten copies on LARGEST PAPER were taken at five guineas each. A small paper copy now sells for five shillings.

A GUIDE TO THE OBJECTS OF CHIEF INTEREST IN THE LOAN COLLECTION OF THE CAXTON CELEBRATION. *London, 1877: fcap. 8vo, pp. 32.*

By Mr. William Blades, *the Caxton* authority, and not less useful as a memorial of the Celebration, than it was valuable as a companion to its riches whilst it was in progress.

WILLIAM CAXTON, THE FIRST ENGLISH PRINTER. A Biography, by Charles Knight. New edition. *London, 1877: fcap. 8vo, wood-cuts, pp. 158.*

In this new edition are certain alterations and omissions as compared with the original edition issued in 1844. "Printed and presented to the Caxton Celebration by William Clowes

and Sons, Stamford Street and Charing Cross." So says the cover, and we should have been glad to have seen these words repeated upon the title-page.

WHO WAS CAXTON? William Caxton, Merchant, Ambassador, Historian, Author, Translator, and Printer. A Monograph. London, 1877: *fcap. 8vo, wood-cuts, pp. 47.*

By Mr. R. H. Blades, but published without his name. Although, for old acquaintance sake, I am partial, personally, to Mr. Knight's little volume, I am bound to say that the present monograph keeps more closely to the point, and that I know no other work published at one shilling in which so complete and authentic an account of Caxton can be found.

And GOD saide Let lyyhte be, and anon
lgyhte was.

Slips with these words, Caxton's own translation of Gen. i. 3, were printed in the Exhibition on paper made in the Exhibition, and having Caxton's device as a watermark. "The crowd 'round the next, where CAXTON HIMSELF is working at a small 'wooden press about two hundred years old, attracts our attention. The old pressman, with his knee-breeches, hoary locks, 'and polite mien, seems made for the press he works at, and it 'for him. He was apprenticed in London, and is one of the 'few now left who has had practical acquaintance with the 'mode in which ball-stocks were stuffed and pelts nailed on. 'The press is probably in its chief features very like that used 'by Caxton, and is without the improvements invented by 'Blaeuw about 1650."—*Guide to Caxton Celebration, p. 31.*

THE NEW BIBLIA PAUPERUM. London, 1877: *small folio, wood-cuts.*

Designed to commemorate alike the Caxton Celebration and the Wiclif Quincentenary. The original I have not yet seen, but the prospectus of the work is now before me. About the year 1832, the late Mr. Sams, of Darlington, discovered at Nuremberg a unique set of thirty-eight wood blocks engraved in 1470, and which then appeared never to have been used in any printed book. These blocks, which illustrate altogether seventy-eight Scriptural subjects, being in the hands of Messrs.

Unwin, the eminent printers of London, they issued them in a volume together with a page of Wiclif's New Testament text bearing upon the subjects treated of. The type is Caxtonian, and the paper hand-made, of material and colour to imitate that used in the fifteenth century. Price to subscribers, one guinea, and the whole edition limited to about two hundred and fifty copies. These details I derive from the prospectus. I did not subscribe to the work, my idea of the value of Mr. Sams's discovery, based upon the specimen of the wood-cuts, not being in accordance with that of Messrs. Unwin. Every copy was disposed of, and the Celebration fund derived a benefit of £27.19.10 from the work.

CAXTON CELEBRATION. Balance Sheet and Report of Executive Committee. *fcap. 8vo, pp. 11.*

Dated November 17, 1877. "One difficulty the Executive are 'compelled to mention and deplore, and that is the delay in 'the production of the corrected Catalogue. This was in great 'measure owing to the fact of the continual growth of the 'scheme, and the almost unceasing additions which were constantly being made to the Exhibition. When the Catalogue 'appeared, as finally corrected, it fully justified the time and 'labour which had been gratuitously bestowed upon it; and it 'will remain a fitting memorial of the Exhibition, and a trustworthy epitome of information upon the subjects of which it 'treats."

Supplemental Balance Sheet and Report of Executive Committee. *fcap. 8vo, pp. 4.*

Dated July 30, 1878. "In presenting the final Balance Sheet 'to the General Committee, little remains to be said, beyond 'conveying an expression of gratification that the anticipations 'contained in the Report laid before the Committee in November last have been more than realized. In that 'Report it was stated 'that a sum not far short of £1000 will be 'handed over to the Printers' Pension Corporation for charitable purposes'; the amount so handed over (including £210. 17s. 5d. especially appropriated to the establishment of the 'Stephenson Pension) is £1116. 3s. 2d."

It is somewhat singular that no undoubted autograph of Caxton has yet been discovered. In the Pepysian Library, at Magdalen College, Cambridge, is an English manuscript of the fifteenth century, consisting of a portion of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which is supposed to be in Caxton's handwriting, and the last page of which has been photographed for the College. One photographic copy was exhibited at the Caxton Celebration (No. 5 in the Catalogue), and by the courtesy of the Master and the kindness of the Society, another is in my possession. There is such a conventional character about the writing that the question of autograph or otherwise cannot well be determined upon the intrinsic evidence. The colophon bears the date of April 22, 1480, and there seems little doubt that the manuscript was prepared for the press, and perhaps printed, but no copy, or fragment even, has yet been discovered in print. In connexion with this point it may be mentioned that Caxton's instructor, Colard Mansion, of Bruges, issued a French translation of the *Metamorphoses*, of which a magnificent copy, printed in May, 1484, is to be seen in the Public Library at Bruges. Not long since, in looking through a catalogue sent to me by Mr. Hayes, a bookseller of Manchester, I noticed a copy of a Latin Bible printed at Nuremberg in 1477, by Coburger, for sale at £35. Appended is a note stating that "This copy appears to have belonged to Caxton, England's 'First Printer, as there is the following inscription on the verso 'of the last leaf but two, *and it has every appearance of being genuine*:-- '*Thys ye first Letter of the craft gab my polychronicon 'wyth certaen wrytins of Ranulf Higden to ye Holy Fadyr Godfrey a 'Maynce 1482. William Caxton.*'" The italics, it is only fair to say, are those of the compiler of the catalogue, and indicate an opinion on his part, in which I, not having seen the original, and judging only from the inscription as printed, was unable to concur. However, I communicated with Mr. Blades at once, who thought he recognized the book in the catalogue as one which had been offered to the Committee of the Caxton Celebration, but which they had not accepted.

The mark or device of Caxton is well known to those who have paid attention to this branch of bibliography. Besides being reproduced in works relating to our First Printer, it is

given, upon a reduced scale, in the fifth edition of Brunet's "Manuel du Libraire" (vol. i, col. 1561), and through the kindness of Mr. Blades it appears, also reduced, upon the title-page of this tractate. So far as is known, it was first used by Caxton in a Missal according to the Use of Sarum, which, not having himself the necessary liturgical type, he employed a printer at Paris to execute for him. This was in 1487, and the book so printed, of which only a single copy is known, is the *editio princeps* of the Sarum Missal. The initials **W. C.** are plain enough, and need no interpretation, but the central portion has been regarded as not quite so clear. Hitherto, it has usually been considered to represent the Arabic figures 4 and 7, and thus to point to the date 1474. For my own part, having long ago been interested in monumental brasses, and as part of that subject in what are called merchants' marks, I have been unable to follow those who came to such a conclusion. Attention has just now been drawn,* in connexion with this matter, to the brass of Alderman Felde in the church of Standon, in Hertfordshire, upon which is a mark bearing a very close resemblance to the central portion of Caxton's device. The Alderman, who was, like Caxton, a mercer, died in 1477, and the identity in character of the two marks forbids the supposition that there was anything distinctive in either. An examination of a very large number of these marks shows the same forms constantly recurring, but differently combined, and it was the initials which specially identified the owner of a particular mark. I see nothing of special significance in that part of Caxton's mark of which I have been speaking.

Not very long ago, as I was walking down a room in the British Museum in which rare and choice books are exhibited in show-cases, one book specially caught my eye, and I said to myself, "I have certainly seen that before somewhere." On examination, I found it to be the fragment of the First Printed English New Testament, which is unique. I could not, therefore, have seen the book elsewhere, but the seeming mystery was soon made plain when I called to mind that I possess a

* Athenæum, No. 2689 (May 10, 1879), p. 601.

copy of Mr. Arber's fac-simile reproduction of that deeply interesting relic. The fac-similist's art is one to which the lover of books is largely indebted. By its means, he can have at home, in his own library, absolute reproductions of volumes which are beyond all price, and of which, as in the instance just mentioned, a single copy only is known; reproductions which, for all practical purposes, stand in the stead of the unattainable originals. The art has reached a perfection which leaves nothing to be desired, and which, viewed under certain aspects, may almost be pronounced to be dangerous. As I write, there is before me a printed fac-simile of a page of the "Spiegel onser Behoudenisse" preserved in the Public Library at Lille, which astonishes those most able to judge by its all but identity with the original. The fac-simile forms the frontispiece to one of the volumes of the Catalogue* of that Library, the Preface to which is an able Essay of nearly three hundred pages on the Invention of Printing, and is by M. Paeile, the Librarian, who also published it as a separate work. Unfortunately, the original leaf is said to have been materially injured by the execution of the fac-simile, which gives me the opportunity of saying that this mischief could not have happened if recourse had been had to any one of the photolithographic processes which are now so frequently and so advantageously adopted. The sale of the Perkins Library, in 1873, comprised a copy on vellum of what is generally known as the Mazarine, but which would be more correctly called the Gutenberg Bible, the copy being deficient, according to Dibdin, in two leaves, which were supplied in fac-simile. In view of the intended sale, a very careful examination was made, by an expert, we may assume, the result being that one leaf was discovered which appeared doubtful, but the second it was impossible to detect. This remarkable instance serves to show how difficult it is even for the professional eye to distinguish from the original work a leaf of well-executed fac-simile. Few, comparatively, amongst book-lovers, can hope to possess a real Caxton. To say nothing of the heavy purse, which is one, and certainly not the least, requisite, the opportunities of acquisi-

* Catalogue de la Bibliothèque de la Ville de Lille. Théologie. Lille : 1859 : 8vo.

tion are few and far between, and they are not likely to increase. The intelligent interest which the productions of the First English Printer now excite, leads to a keen competition on the part of public collections, from which a book, having once entered, is not likely to emerge. Mr. Francis Fry in one of his works of Biblical Bibliography gives an original leaf of each of the editions of the Bible which he describes. I know not whether the day will come when it will be possible for those interested in printing to purchase a leaf which had once been in the first press at Westminster. At present no signs of such a day appear, though it would be putting a very imperfect copy of any one of Caxton's books to no unworthy use to offer it, even in single leaves, to those who would reverently cherish the smallest fragment of any production of the earliest printing-press set up in England. In the meanwhile, we must be content with what we have it in our power to obtain, that is to say, with reproductions such as have already been furnished, or may be issued hereafter. A list of what has hitherto appeared in this line, I now beg to offer, and in the remarks upon each work I have endeavoured to point out its peculiar features as they presented themselves to the person under whose auspices the reprint was executed. Merely as rare books, quite independent of any connection with Caxton, or of the particular style of reproduction, they commend themselves to the notice of the lover of books. In the List, as it may be proper to observe, "imitation" does not mean ordinary black-letter, but special Caxtonian type, with which the eye is gradually getting familiar.





❧THE❧CAXTON❧REPRODUCTIONS❧

The Game of the Chesse, by William Caxton. *The original by Caxton has no title-page or date. Folio. IMITATION.*

Reprint occupying 164 pages, not numbered; Remarks, pp. 1—8, signed Vincent Figgins, and dated May 1st, 1855; a list of the works ascribed to Caxton, as printed by Mr. Knight in his Biography of Caxton, pp. 9—11; List of places where and persons by whom Printing was practiced at the time Caxton commenced it in England, pp. 12—13; Synopsis of Characters and Combinations used in “The Game of the Chesse,” p. 15.

For this, the first reproduction, whether imitation or in facsimile, of any of Caxton's works, we are indebted to the late Mr. Vincent Figgins, the well-known type-founder of the City of London. Notwithstanding all that has since been written upon the press of Caxton, the Remarks of Mr. Figgins are still worthy of careful perusal. He suggests that the types of Caxton were cut upon very soft metal, probably upon pewter, and observes that the First Printer's early works show evidences of the frequent renewal of the types. There are errors sufficient throughout the original work, here reproduced, to make it doubtful whether revise proofs were pulled in those days. The original which Mr. Figgins followed is in the King's Library at the British Museum. The fact that it is printed from *cut* metal types, and is a mixture of black-letter and the character called secretary, with all the shades of modification and approximation to each other of which the two styles are

capable, made the work of reproducing by means of cast types from a single cut punch somewhat difficult. The paper upon which the reproduction is printed was made expressly for its publication, with the reed- and water-marks imitated from the original. Mr. Figgins's motive in producing the book was partly to enable his contemporaries better to appreciate the industry of Caxton, but more specially to assist in raising funds for the completion and endowment of the Printers' Alms-Houses at Wood Green, Tottenham. The book, unfortunately, was not a success; the copies of it after a time came into the hands of Mr. John Russell Smith, of Soho Square, who issued it with a title-page bearing his name as publisher, and the date 1860.

The Gouernayle of Helthe: with The Medecyne of ye Stomacke. Reprinted from Caxton's edition (circa m.cccc.xci). With Introductory Remarks and Notes by William Blades. Imprinted by Blades, East, & Blades, Abchurch Lane, London, 1858. Quarto. One page fac-simile. IMITATION.

Frontispiece, which is a fac-simile, by Mr. G. I. F. Tupper, of the first page of the original work, and, for a printed fac-simile, says Mr. Blades, it has probably never been excelled; Title, Contents, and Preface, pp. i—viij, the Preface being dated August, 1858; Remarks, pp. 1—25; The Gouernayle of Helthe, and Medicina Stomachi, as printed by William Caxton, 36 pages, not numbered; an Annotated Reprint of the foregoing tract, in modern type; Glossary, occupying pp. 105—110.

An effort has been made, by the use of types very similar to those employed by Caxton, to give this reprint something of the appearance of the original. To effect this still further, the types were expressly cast in pewter, which, from its softness, yields an impression resembling more the productions of the early printers, than could be obtained from a harder material. Great care has been taken to make the text an accurate reproduction of the original. Not only has the orthography been strictly adhered to, but it is printed page for page, line for line, and word for word, with all the peculiarities and variations of contracted and double letters. . . . Only fifty-five copies have been printed, which will be the limit of the issue.—*Preface.*

Ars Moriendi. Printed by William Caxton. (1491?) Quarto. IMITATION.

Twenty pages, of which the Reprint occupies 16.

This small Tract from the Press of William Caxton is reprinted from the unique copy lately discovered in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. It appears to be a translation from the Latin, probably by Caxton himself, but no other copy in any language, in print or manuscript, appears to be known. The Impression is limited to fifty copies on Paper and four on Vellum.

Jan., 1859.

W.[ILLIAM] B.[LADES]

The discovery was made in the autumn of 1858. A gentleman, not connected with the Library, knowing how little trust can be placed in the catalogues of fifty years ago, spent some time at the Bodleian in examining the old shelves, and in the Turner Collection found this *Ars Moriendi* bound up with several other black-letter works making a thick volume lettered "Tracts," of which the first only appeared in the catalogue. Mine is a presentation copy from Mr. Blades. This work is quite different from "*The Arte and Crafte to know well to Dye*," printed by Caxton about the same date.

Chaucer's Canterbury Tales. Folio. First Edition. Certain leaves only. IMITATION.

A few copies, not more than half-a-dozen, I believe, were printed of some leaves which were required to complete an imperfect copy of this edition of Chaucer's great work. By the kindness of Mr. Blades I possess the following leaves: 1, 2, 163, 179, 186, 252, 357, 362, 363, 364, 366, 368, and 369. The typographical execution and the paper are alike admirable, and hold their own even when placed by the side of an absolute fac-simile. A set of the leaves was priced six guineas in the catalogue of a London bookseller.

Morale Prouerbes, Composed in French by Cristyne de Pisan. translated by the Earl Rivers, and reprinted from the original edition of William Caxton, A. D. 1478, with Introductory Remarks, by William Blades. London, 1859. Folio. IMITATION.

Title, etc., and Remarks, pp. 10, not numbered, the Remarks dated September, 1859; the *Morale Prouerbes* of Cristyne, printed in imitation of the original, 8 pp., not numbered; *Les Prouerbes Moraulx*, as composed by Cristyne de Pisan, together with *The Morale Prouerbes*, as translated by Anthoine, Earl Rivers, the former from the Harleian Manuscript No. 4431, and the latter from the Printed Edition by William Caxton, 20 pages in modern type.

There is no need of apology in introducing the following Reprint to the notice of the reader. Whether as one of the first products of the printing-press of our first typographer, William Caxton,—or as an interesting specimen of mediæval poetry,—or merely as a reprint of a tract so scarce that no Public Library in Europe possesses a copy,—an interest attaches to it which the editor hopes will make it welcome to every book-lover. “The Moral Proverbs of Christine” were printed in 1478. On the last page, the printer, not liking to tack on a prose tail-piece to a metrical poem, has given us the colophon in rhyme. We may consider the last stanza, if not the preceding one also, as Caxton’s own composition, and there we find the date, viz., the 14th day of February, in the 17th year of King Edward IV.—*Remarks*.

It need scarcely be said that in the matter of typographical execution no pains were spared to make the reprint a close imitation of the original. The paper gives an excellent idea of what we might expect to find in a book which had escaped the changes and chances of four hundred years. I assign to *Morale Prouerbes* the first place amongst copies which are not fac-simile reproductions. Printed for Presentation only, the impression being limited to ninety-five copies. My copy was the gift of Mr. Blades.

The Statutes of Henry VII. *In Exact Fac-Simile, from the very rare Original printed by Caxton in 1489. Edited, with Notes and Introduction, by John Rae, Member of the Royal Institution. London, John Camden Hotten, 74 and 75 Piccadilly, 1869. Small Folio. FAC-SIMILE.*

Title; Introduction, pp. i—xxi, dated June, 1869; Fac-Simile Statutes, occupying 80 pages, not numbered; Annotations and Index, pp. 1—32.

The early Statutes of Henry VII. may be said to mark an era in English History, since they are the *first laws* made in the ordinary language of that period. The reprint, which it is proposed to publish, is a most remarkable fac-simile in Lithography by hand, and is printed on paper made in Holland expressly for the purpose, which paper thoroughly represents that upon which the original was printed. . . . The following are some of the Statutes: Price of Hats and Caps; French Wines; Act for Peopling Isle of Wight; Against Butchers; Rebels in the Field; Correcting Priests; Fires in London; Concerning Customs; Marrying a Woman against her Will.—*Prospectus*.

Notwithstanding what Mr. Rae states to the contrary (pp. ii and iii of his Introduction), there is, as Mr. Blades had said, a perfect copy of the original in the National Library at Paris.

The following circular letter accompanied the Prospectus:

Sir:—

9, Mincing Lane,
LONDON, E. C., February 19th, 1869. }

I venture to forward you the Prospectus of a volume I am about to publish, in the hope that you may not deem it an unworthy addition to your Library.

Should I succeed in inducing you to become acquainted with a work which apart from its unique character displays the perfection to which typography had attained in Caxton's time, my object in recalling the skill and perseverance of one to whom posterity is so largely indebted for the means of diffusing knowledge will be fully accomplished.

Permit me to add that after payment of the expenses incurred, whatever surplus may remain will be equally divided between the Royal Hospital for Incurables and the North London Consumptive Hospital, — Institutions which have especial claims upon Christian philanthropy. J. RAE.

The number printed is not stated; the price to subscribers was £1.11.6 per copy.

The Fifteen O's, and other Prayers. Printed by commandment of the Princess Elizabeth, Queen of England and of France, and also of the Princess Margaret, Mother of our Sovereign Lord the King. By their most humble subject and servant, William Caxton. (circa m.cccc.xc.) Reproduced in Photo-Lithography by Stephen Ayling. Griffith and Farran, corner of St. Paul's Church-yard, MDCCCLXIX. Quarto. FAC-SIMILE.

Title; Dedication to Sir William Stirling Maxwell, Bart.; three introductory pages in ordinary black letter; the fac-simile, occupying 43 pages, not numbered.

"The original is one of the most beautiful and unique specimens of early English typography that is anywhere to be found. It differs in style from every other production of Caxton's press, in that each page is surrounded by an ornamental border." The book takes its name from prayers which it contains commencing with the ejaculation O. Mr. Ayling considers it is more than probable that this is the first book of prayers in English issued by the followers of Wiclif. The reproduction is bound in vellum, with red edges, and has upon each cover a fac-simile of Caxton's device. It affords a very fair idea of the works given to the world by our First Printer. It was published, I believe, at ten shillings and sixpence. My copy was a present from the publishers.

The Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers. A Fac-Simile Reproduction of the First Book printed in England, by William Caxton, in 1477. London, Elliot Stock, 62 Paternoster Row, 1877. Quarto. FAC-SIMILE.

Titles and Preface, pp i--xii, the latter by Mr. Blades, dated May, 1877.

In connection with the Celebration of the Four Hundredth Anniversary of the Introduction of Printing into England, it is proposed to issue a memorial volume, commemorating the event, and at the same time presenting to modern readers, an exact *fac-simile* of THE FIRST BOOK PRINTED IN ENGLAND BY CAXTON. This most interesting first English printed book is now generally admitted to be The Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers, printed in the Almonry at Westminster in the year 1477. The original copies, from which the reproduction has been, by permission, made, are those preserved in the Library of the British Museum, and in the choice collection of Samuel Christie-Miller, Esq., at Britwell House, Bucks, the latter being the finest copy known. . . . The Britwell copy is a small folio volume in perfect preservation, very beautifully printed on thick ash-grey paper, with red initial letters; it is one of the most beautiful examples of Caxton's press, and is remarkable for its evenness of colour, clearness, and careful printing. A very fine and perfect copy of this precious volume may be valued at one thousand pounds. In order to render the reproduction an exact fac-simile of the *editio princeps*, a paper has been specially manufactured for the work, having all the peculiarities of the original; the printing is executed by a photographic process which reproduces infallibly all the characteristics of the original work; and the binding is a careful reproduction of that of Caxton's day. . . . This memorial volume is rendered more interesting and, to the connoisseur, more valuable by an Introduction by William Blades, Esq., the author of the "Life and Typography of William Caxton," giving a short historical account of the book, the circumstances which led to its publication, and its position among the works printed by Caxton. It is believed that the publication of this work will, apart from its value to collectors, be generally acceptable as representing the first work issued from the press in England, and as illustrating the state of the art of printing in its infancy.—*Prospectus*.

Visitors to the Caxton Exhibition will not soon forget the Britwell House copy which was placed alone, by itself, in a glass case, upon a velvet cushion, and open at the page of the Epilogue where Caxton gives the place and the year of his printing it: *Imprynted by me William Caxton at Westmestre the pere of our lord. M. CCCC. Lxxvij.* Earl Spencer has a copy of this first edition of the Dictes which has the unique distinction of a colophon in which the date is more precisely given, thus:—*Whiche was fynished the. xviij. day of the moneth of Nouembre. & the seuententh pere of the regne of Kyng Edward the. fourth.*

The reprint of the Dictes consisted of a subscription edition of two hundred and fifty copies at one guinea each to those who sent in their names by June 1st, 1877, and one guinea and a half after that date.

Fac-Similes illustrating the Labours of William Caxton at Westminster, and the Introduction of Printing into England. With a Memoir of our First Printer, and Bibliographical Particulars

of the Illustrations. By Francis Compton Price. London, Privately Printed, 1877. The Four Hundredth Anniversary. Quarto. FAC-SIMILE.

This work scarcely comes within the limits that I had proposed to myself, as indicated by the title of this tractate, but I trust my readers will not complain if they find something beyond what they might have been led to expect.

Title and Memoir, 8 pages, not numbered; and the following fac-similes executed by the author, who is the fac-similist of the British Museum, with descriptions of each:

1. Indulgence granted by John Kendale, as Legate from Pope Sixtus IV., to those contributing to the defence of Rhodes against the Turks, dated 1480, with large four-line wood-cut initial, the earliest instance of printed initials in England. A blank is left in the printed form for the name of the person in whose favour the Indulgence was granted. In this instance, the blank is filled up with the names of Symon Mountfort and Emma his wife.
2. Caxton's Handbill Advertisement, being the first broadside printed in England. Two copies are known, one in the British Museum, from which this fac-simile is taken, and the other in the collection of Earl Spencer.
3. The Epilogue to the "Dictes or Sayings of the Philosophers." The translation which Caxton printed had been made by Anthony, Earl Rivers. The Earl having omitted to translate certain conclusions of Socrates "towchyng women," Caxton supplies the omission in the Epilogue here reproduced, which is thus an example of his own style of literary composition.
4. The Wood-cut of the Crucifixion, prefixed to the "Fifteen O's," but omitting the border, which Mr. Price regards as detracting greatly from the artistic merit of the representation. This is believed to be the most considerable wood-cut printed in England before the year 1500.
5. With these fac-similes is included a lithographic copy, from Strutt's "Royal and Ecclesiastical Antiquities," of the drawing contained in the MS. of the "Dictes" which is preserved in the Archiepiscopal Library at Lambeth. Added are reasons for holding the "figure in black" to be an authentic portrait of Caxton.

The impression was strictly limited to one hundred and twenty-five copies, numbered and signed, and was issued to subscribers in the month of September, 1877. The subscription was ten shillings and sixpence per copy.

The Holbein Society's Fac Simile Reprints. The Golden Legend. A Reproduction from a copy in the Manchester Free Library. With an Introduction by Alfred Aspland, Editor. Printed for the Holbein Society by Wyman & Sons, 74 and 75, Great Queen Street, London, M.DCCC.LXXVIII. Folio. FAC-SIMILE.

Titles, etc., and Tables of Contents, Notices of William Caxton, pp. 7—41; Appendix, with traces of Water-Marks in paper, pp. 43—45; The Golden Legend, with fac-simile of large Wood-cut of Saints, pp. 47—51; Fac-Simile Plates, 68 pages; Epilogue, in modern type, 1 p.

This reproduction is one of the series issued to its subscribers by the Holbein Society established at Manchester for publishing fac-simile reprints of rare books in which Art and Literature are united. The portions reproduced are “*The natyuyte of Saynt Johan Baptiste*,” The Lives of Saints Paul, Peter, John, Matthew, and Luke, and “*The natyuyte of our Blessid Lady*,” the exact size of the original, and printed on paper in imitation of that used by Caxton. “This book, of which no perfect ‘copy is known, has been unanimously allowed to be the finest ‘ever published by Caxton, both for size (being large folio), ‘and also for its illustrations.” So state the Council of the Society in announcing to the members the intention to issue this reproduction. The original followed is in the Manchester Free Library, and was purchased in 1864 for £5.10.0, not being recognized as a Caxton until some little time after its acquisition. It is very imperfect, beginning with folio cxxxviiij, and belongs to the first of the three editions of the Golden Legend which Caxton printed. The Holbein Society’s volume contains a biographical notice of Caxton, in which are embodied some particulars of the Celebration of 1877, and also a list of the printers and presses in Europe during his life-time. Upon one point which is always of interest in connexion with our First Printer, I find the following observations, which I quote without expressing any opinion respecting them :

Caxton never printed the Bible, a matter which he must have deeply pondered over ; but as he was an eminently prudent man, he shrank from quarrels with the Court and the Church. . . . The Council of Constance in 1415 had condemned forty-five articles maintained by Wickliffe, rightly called the "Morning Star of the Reformation," as heretical, false, and erroneous ; his bones were ordered to be dug up and cast on a dunghill, burnt, and cast on the waters. . . . His Bible was condemned, and the production of it would have exposed the printer to heavy punishment. Caxton could not tell, in reverting to earlier manuscripts, how far he was treading on forbidden ground ; nor, till the Court of England was in open defiance of the Pope, could this be done in safety—and so he printed no Bible.

We have also the editor's account of the Golden Legend, a work which in the Caxton Celebration was included in the list of Bibles, and which contains a translation into English of nearly the whole of the Pentateuch, and of a great part of the Gospels. The volume contains engravings of the water-marks which are found on the paper upon which the original is printed, and in this useful particular stands alone amongst the Caxtonian reproductions that have yet appeared. This detail, of course, did not escape Mr. Blades, and the happiest representation of water-marks I have met with is the "transparency" which forms plate ix. in the second volume of his "Life and Typography of William Caxton." To the reproduction now under notice, is added a Supplement of a series of full pages and illustrations from the Antwerp edition of the Golden Legend printed in 1505. On the cover is a fac-simile of Caxton's device, which might have been figured with advantage on one of the pages of the volume.

The Curial. "Translated thus in Englysshe by wylliam Caxton."

Mr. G. I. F. Tupper has in the press a fac-simile of the King's copy in the British Museum, the only perfect copy known, and by his courtesy I am enabled to give the following details: The fac-simile will be printed on paper as nearly as may be resembling the original, and will be of exactly the same size. It will not be preceded by any title or announcement of any sort, but will stand at the beginning of the book as in the original. It will be followed by a description of the original, giving typographical particulars, which will call for some remarks on Caxton's typography generally, and on his translation of *The Curial*, and there will be some account of Alain Chartier, with a list of his works. Next, and lastly, will come

a reprint of the fac-simile with marginal and interleaved notes and references, furnishing, where necessary, the various readings of the printed editions, and of the Latin manuscripts in the British Museum. A small number of copies only will be printed. The fac-similes which illustrate and adorn Mr. Wm. Blades's two noble quartos—fac-similes which may be quoted as most perfect models—bear their own testimony to the skill of Mr. Tupper, whose effort always is to get microscopic exactness. The pains taken to this end are rarely appreciated and by few persons, for few ever take the trouble to compare a fac-simile with the original. On one interesting point I must quote Mr. Tupper's own words in a communication with which he has favoured me:

I think I ought to add an "apology" for offering a hand-made fac-simile in these days of photo-lithography, not merely because the work was more than half done before photo-lithography was well developed, but because I should like to call attention to the fact, not recognized, that besides the doubtfulness of a photo-lithograph by reason of the imperfections in the lithographic part of the process, and the blots, etc., caused by the photographic rendering of yellow stains in the paper having to be corrected (?) by the workman (not artist) without even the original by him. Besides this, the photograph is not a *fac-simile* at all, but a *pictorial representation*, *i e.*, a view from a single point, and hence a point by point examination of it is a solecism. This is more than a distinction without a difference, as I am sure you will easily see. So, that although these photo-lithographs for some purposes are useful, they should not be allowed by their specious appearance (the *general* processes by which they are produced giving them what may be called a natural aspect) and by the supposed impossibility of error in anything produced by photography, to usurp a position to which they have no title.

Writing me further upon this subject, under date of June 2d, 1879, Mr. Tupper continues:

As you express some interest in the remarks on fac-similes, I think I must, if you will pardon the egotism, mention yet another point, which would come with better grace from some one else, inasmuch as I must needs for the sake of showing its value, refer to my own experience, for want of knowing what others have done in the same way. I mean the minute examination to a degree most unlikely otherwise to be made, that the hand-made fac-simile necessitates, the results of which may be not unimportant. Thus, had Blades's fac-similes been done in photo-lithography, it is very likely that the method which Caxton, in connexion with Colard Mansion, adopted of printing the red and black at one impression, would never have been discovered. The same may be said of the division of the No. 2 type into 2 and 2*, and the resultant discovery of the mode adopted of producing the second edition, so to speak, of the type. And so, it has seemed to me, that a judicious analysis on this system of the early printed works (types and engravings), would furnish a history of these arts

of the most minute and interesting kind, and I have deeply regretted that business needs have prevented me from following out this work. So again, the fac-simile examination exposed the true reading of the cancelled Order in Council awarding Milton two hundred pounds, about which there had been so much controversy; and I might mention several other matters. These trifles I have unfortunately had to mention are, indeed, the veriest trifles in themselves, but is not every missing or ill-forged link in history worth supplying or re-making? and so, I do not know that we have much to rejoice at over photo-lithography more than over the other "royal roads" with which this facile age abounds.

Besides the Museum copy, one other only is known of Caxton's edition of the Curial; this, which is in the collection of the Earl Spencer, is much cropped, and is deficient in the first leaf, which, however, is supplied in beautiful fac-simile.



Printed by John Springer, at the Daily Press Printing Office,
Dubuque Street, Iowa City, Iowa.

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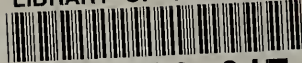
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